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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CALDWELL – Southwest District Health learned today that a pool of 50 *Culex tarsalis* mosquitoes collected in a trap last week from the Canyon Hill area of Caldwell, and outside the Canyon County Mosquito Abatement District, have tested positive for West Nile virus.

The West Nile virus is a mosquito and bird cycle disease. Animals and humans are infected incidentally when bitten by a female mosquito whose saliva is infected with the virus.

“We know that the disease has been detected in several places within Canyon County—in both mosquitoes and a horse, so we want to ensure everyone is taking precautions to protect themselves and their families,” said Gene Gunderson, Director for Southwest District Health. “We can all take steps to reduce mosquito habitat around our homes and adopt simple practices to minimize the exposure to mosquito bites,” he added.

About 20 percent of those infected with the West Nile virus experience mild flu-like symptoms, such as fever, body aches, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes a mild rash. Gunderson recommends that anyone who is experiencing these symptoms, consult their medical provider.

To educate the public about the symptoms and precautions, Southwest District Health will post additional posters and fact sheets throughout Canyon County. The health district has also distributed fact sheets to medical providers in the area.

For more information about the West Nile Virus, visit the following Web Sites.

Southwest District Web Page

<http://www.publichealthidaho.com>

Mosquito control

<http://www.mosquito-control-products.com/mosquito-dunks.htm>

<http://store.arbico-organics.com/organic-pest-control-most-requested-mosquito-control.html>

Idaho Office of Epidemiology & Food Protection

<http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov>

Fish & Game

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/wildlife/manage_issues/wnv/wnvwild.cfm

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/wildlife/manage_issues/wnv/home.cfm

Center's for Disease Control & Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidad/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/clinicians>

July 12th, 2005 CDC map of WNV surveillance findings:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/surv&control05Maps.htm>

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Fax contains 3 pages

PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE AGAINST MOSQUITOES and WEST NILE VIRUS

- Limit outdoor activities at dawn, dusk, and early evening hours when mosquitoes are most common.
- Wear light-colored, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks when you are outdoors.
- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET on your clothing and bare skin. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a low concentration of DEET, 10 percent or less, for children ages 2 to 12 years. Read the label and be very cautious on the use of DEET on infants. Also, CDC just added recommendations for products containing Picaridin, Oil of lemon eucalyptus, and certain products which contain permethrin.
- Eliminate potential mosquito breeding grounds by changing water containers frequently, such as standing, stagnant water, old tires full of water, bird baths, rain gutters, and feeding troughs.
- Fix window and door screens.
- Report dead birds such as magpies, ravens, crows, jays and raptors, this is a warning sign that WNV is present in the area. Contact your local Fish and Game office.
- Have your horse vaccinated with licensed WNV vaccine prior to the mosquito season. Protect your horses by reducing mosquito breeding habitats around your stable and pasture by keeping water troughs clean and use irrigation practices that do not lead to standing water by changing them frequently.
- Some areas may be too large to effectively drain. For these, there are over-the-counter products available at many hardware and farm stores (often referred to as “mosquito donuts”) that can be placed in larger fish and decorative ponds that, while fatal to mosquito larva, are not harmful to humans, birds, or animals.